

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, on Monday, May 18, 2009, I was excused from a series of three rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all three measures.

These measures were: H. Res. 300, a resolution congratulating Camp Dudley YMCA of Westport, New York, on the occasion of its 125th anniversary, introduced by Mr. McHUGH of New York; S. 386, the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act of 2009, as amended, introduced by Senator LEAHY of Vermont; and H. Res. 442, a resolution recognizing the importance of the Child and Adult Care Food Program and its positive effect on the lives of low income children and families, introduced by Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL CHILD AWARENESS MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 18, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I stand in strong support of House Resolution 438, a bipartisan resolution which expresses the sense of the U.S. House of Representatives that National Child Awareness Month should be established in the month of September.

September is traditionally "back-to-school" month, a time when families focus on preparing children for the coming school year. Recognizing September as National Child Awareness Month will heighten the American public's attentiveness to the importance of our children's health, education, safety and character development through the ongoing efforts of the numerous organizations and individuals who help to protect and nurture them. With this resolution we express our support for a month-long effort to recognize the importance of children in our society as they grown into responsible citizens.

It is widely recognized that a strong, supportive family unit is the most important factor in the well-being of a child. Unfortunately there is no guarantee that every child will have a support system to depend on. Thankfully there are many organizations that provide for the most disadvantaged children in communities across the country. Even children with solid support systems benefit from youth-serving organizations which enrich their lives through activities such as sports, the arts, philanthropy and further education outside of the classroom.

I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to the 69 bipartisan cosponsors and to the gentlelady from Orange County, the lead sponsor, LORETTA SANCHEZ, for her efforts on behalf of this resolution. In addition I would like to extend a special thanks to the Education and Labor Committee for moving the bill quickly. It is my hope that Senators FEINSTEIN and BURR will quickly pass a companion resolution in the Senate chamber and that

President Obama will by Presidential Proclamation, designate September as National Child Awareness Month so that the many child-focused programs of the federal government might also be highlighted.

Most importantly, I commend the many local and national youth-serving organizations and charities dedicated to the well-being of children across the nation and the world.

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL AMUSEMENT PARK RIDE SAFETY ACT OF 2009

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, Memorial Day is the beginning of the season when many American families take their children to our amusement parks for a day of fun and sun. Most Americans, when they enter an amusement park, believe that the rides at these parks are subject to oversight by the nation's top consumer safety watchdog—the Consumer Product Safety Commission, CPSC. However, this is, unbelievably, not the case. Since 1981, a "Roller Coaster Loophole" has been carved out of the Consumer Product Safety Act.

This loophole is a dangerous gap in child safety and injury prevention, and it is having serious consequences. Between 1987 and 2004, the CPSC reports that there were 3,400 amusement park ride-related accidents and deaths. This estimate is likely lower than the actual number of injuries, due to the CPSC's lack of authority over fixed-site rides.

It is time to act on the words of President Obama when he called for us to, "do more to protect the American public—especially our nation's children—from being harmed by unsafe products."

It is time to put the safety of our children first—it is time to close the Roller Coaster Loophole.

Today, I am re-introducing the National Amusement Park Safety Act, to restore safety oversight to a largely unregulated industry and protect our nation's children.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. GRESHAM BARRETT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, unfortunately I missed recorded votes on the House floor on Tuesday, May 19, 2009. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 270 (Motion to Suspend the rules and Agree to H.R. 1089), "nay" on rollcall vote No. 271 (Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to S. 896), "yea" on rollcall vote No. 272 (Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H. Res. 360).

SMALL BUSINESS AID BILL

HON. BETSY MARKEY

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Ms. MARKEY of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the Small Business Assistance in Debt Bill (Small Business AID Bill). The Small Business AID Bill will expand the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 loan program to be used to refinance conventional, non-SBA loans. This bill will permit small business owners to access capital and tap into equity that is locked in their commercial real estate due to the financial and banking crisis. Market conditions have changed and are making it harder for small businesses to gain access to capital to continue investing in and expanding their businesses. My bill reduces risk to banks from conventional, non-SBA loans on their balance sheets while simultaneously infusing cash into the banking system. This change will not require additional taxpayer support or an additional Congressional allocation, since this program is self-supporting.

Many small businesses have been hamstrung by today's economic conditions. Due to changes in the banking industry's ability and willingness to lend, small businesses are being squeezed out of capital markets. Banks, like most Americans, have been forced to tighten their belts; and banks have had to limit access to capital. With a lack of available capital, small businesses, the economic engine of America, are in crisis. Within the next year, approximately \$2.5 billion in commercial loans will come due. Many banks will not be willing or able to renew these loans for small businesses, many whom will be unable to raise the necessary financing to survive. Other small businesses are being forced to stay in loans that are higher than today's current interest rates. Small businesses need another means to refinance their loans to weather this financial storm and potentially expand through new capital. By allowing SBA-backed lenders to extend financing small businesses will be able to: acquire land, construct buildings, or purchase equipment and collateralize fixed assets, avoid prepayment penalties, financing fees, and other costs. Small businesses will receive these benefits while obtaining better loan terms and lower interest rates for existing debt.

A good way to illustrate how my bill works may be helpful to my colleagues: Acme Company owns a building that an appraiser values at \$100,000. Acme owes \$70,000 on the building to their local bank. Due to the economic and financial crises bank regulators require the bank to downgrade their loans with Acme. The bank severely restricts or eliminates Acme's line of credit. The absence of the line of credit causes a very real hardship, impacting Acme's cash flow. With the inability to manage cash, Acme is severely impacted and encounters problems with operating day-to-day. While Acme has equity in their building, their bank cannot and would not allow them to access this equity due to the downgraded borrower status. With my bill, the SBA would be able to offer a new 504 loan to Acme for up to \$40,000 (since the bill limits lending up to 40% of the value of the property). With this new loan, Acme would be able